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THE REORGANIZATION OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICTS (Western Zone Germany)
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THE REORGANIZATION OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICTS

Hans Maretsch
Wiesbaden, Stuttgart

Introductory Remarks

Commencing 1 Jan 1950 the statistics of freight movements by railroad, sea- and waterway transport, and long distance trucking are based on new domestic transportation districts. (Comp. circular of the Federal Statistical Office dated 3 Dec 1949, Dept. V Maine/Rhine). These transportation districts (VB) were grouped uniformly for all transportation media and predominantly set up along economic lines. By contrast, the former transportation districts predominantly followed the boundaries of political subdivisions and showed different limits for overland traffic and navigation. Therefore, it will be possible for the first time to give for 1950 a uniform statistical breakdown for all transportation media of the reciprocal flow of freight according to transportation districts, kinds of products, and quantity of products. The reorganization of the transportation districts was arranged by the Federal Statistical Office in collaboration with the Land Statistical Offices, the Land Planning Offices, the City Statistical Offices, the administrations of transportation media, and the organizations of trade and industry. Since the transportation districts are also of importance in regional research work for the description of the classification principles guiding the reorganization in theory and practice is in order: Note: Compare also the following papers: "The need for a uniform subdivision of districts for all transportation statistics and the possibility of creating uniform transportation districts" in Monthly statistical bulletin for the British Zone of Occupation, No 8/48, p. 70 ff. and "Transportation districts as a means of describing product-wise interrelationships and their importance for the National Economy and

Society" in General Statistical Archives, Vol 33, No 3, p. 295 ff.7

I. Uniform and rational organization of transportation districts as an indispensable prerequisite for the economic value of freight statistics.

Transportation connects communities, regions, and continents. It is, on the one hand, determined by economic relationships and, on the other hand, is itself the determining factor for the location of economic activity. It forms a network covering the economic areas. It is the task of statistics to make the threads of this network visible in order to serve as a basis for the planning of transportation, for the location of economic activity, and ^{for} the policy of freight rates. Thus the task of the statistics of freight movements (G. B. St.) is defined. They have to show what and how much was transported by which means of transportation and by which route freight moved from points of origin to points of destination. The statistics of freight movements is, therefore, with respect to the productwise interchange between the domestic economic areas, domestic trade statistics, oriented according to viewpoints of the economics of transportation. With respect to the economic interchange of domestic and foreign areas and in regard to the transit traffic from and to foreign areas, it becomes a supplementation of the foreign trade statistics.

Regardless of the detailed methods used for the collection of necessary statistical data, two elements have to be present before reliable statistics of freight movements can be compiled:

1. a systematic list of products uniformly set up for all media of transportation (available since 1935, but in need of revision) in order to make branchwise comparisons of the flow of products, and
2. classification according to transportation districts uniformly set up for all media of transportation in order to make regional comparisons among the carriers with respect to their importance in the respective economic regions.

Evidently the deductive value of the statistics of freight movements depends on whether or not the transportation districts have been grouped effectively. The statistics of freight movements which is compiled with considerable effort and expense can, therefore, fulfill its economic tasks only if the grouping of the transportation districts is carried out according to certain general principles of economic, transport-economic, and politico-administrative nature which have been brought into sound synthesis.

II. General principles for the grouping into transportation districts.

Note: Since for the delimitation of foreign districts, for obvious reasons, mainly political boundaries apply, the principles applicable to foreign transportation districts will not be dealt with in this connection.

1. Consideration of the structural nature of the area to be grouped.

Since it is the purpose of every regional statistical study to give a quantitative description of the structural composition of individual economic areas as well as of the resulting interrelationships, a grouping into transportation districts has to be done in such a way that the origin in and the exchange of products between the individual economic regions can be recognized. Therefore, the individual transportation points have to be grouped into transportation districts according to economic considerations, i.e., areas with the same economic characteristics have to be contrasted in a logical way with other likewise structurally uniform regions. The creation of organically delimited economic areas meets with difficulties caused by the nature of the problem. For one, not always can the special character of a region be determined clearly because industrial and agricultural regions are only seldom distinctly separated from one another. Furthermore, the dynamic forces of economics and society are so powerful that an area showing a certain final development is an exception. A completely reliable subdivision of an area into economic regions must therefore remain an unobtainable ideal.

2. Consideration of the peculiarities of transportation media and of the products to be carried.

Furthermore, it is necessary to take into account the peculiarities of specific means of transportation: ship and railroad are bound to follow given lines of communication, while truck traffic has fan-like potentialities. Additionally, the fact that different types of products (raw materials--finished products) have varying transportation requirements is of importance. The manner of operation of the individual carriers in conjunction with the differentiated transportation requirements of different products brings about definite conceptions with respect to the economic functions of the individual means of transportation which must influence the configuration of the transportation districts (wide or narrow in area).

For transportation by ship, a typical medium for the transportation of bulk products, larger areas may be grouped into transportation districts because the shipping and reception centers of bulk products will, in any event, come clearly into focus. On the other hand, for railroading and trucking especially, smaller transportation districts have to be formed because both can transport over widely dispersed routes not only bulk products, but also highly differentiated piece goods (in contrast to ship transport, which by its nature makes centralization of production sites and transportation routes necessary, railroads and trucks lead to economic decentralization). Another reason is that in larger areas certain (counter-directional) transportation effects might compensate one another and thus not become apparent in the statistical data. The wider the area is in which a transportation medium operates the more it serves in short distance transportation, the greater is the necessity to show its effects within certain economic regions.

Note: In view of the peculiar conditions of the German transportation system, airplanes as carriers of freight and pipelines as carriers of oil are not being discussed in this paper.

3. Consideration of politico-administrative viewpoints.

A comparison of the boundaries of economic areas formed according to objective criteria with the limits of political subdivisions shows numerous overlaps: The modern economy, characterized by a pronounced dynamic force, has partly broken the traditional administrative boundaries and, utilizing the natural conditions of the area, has created new economic regions. Therefore, a grouping of transportation districts which is only based on the economic and transport-economic considerations would in many cases have to disregard political subdivisions. But since people live within the boundaries of political subdivisions and particularly since by the reorganization of Germany the Laender of the Federation have assumed special importance, one has at first to integrate the productwise interrelationships into the overall relationships of the national economy (for the purpose of making comparisons of production and consumption); thereupon one has to establish a connecting link to the Lebensraum which is subdivided according to general needs (in order to establish certain sociological effects of transportation: e.g., effects on the social and economic structures. It is possible that such comparisons would show that the traditional administrative subdivisions did not keep pace with economic developments in general and with the trends of transportation in particular. Or it might result that the new administrative boundaries were established without consideration for economic conditions and therefore might be in need of revision.

4. Synthesis of the grouping principles according to preponderant considerations.

In theory, each one of the three aspects - Economy, Transportation, and Administration - could come into its full right when a subdivision into transportation districts is attempted. In that case, the smallest units must be kept so small that they could be gathered into larger

units according to one of the aspects: economic, transport, economic, administrative. This approach (which would bring about tripled statistics) cannot be taken because the number of transportation districts has to be kept down to that really necessary in the interest of legibility of the statistical tables and because of work and cost factors.

The perfect requirements which result from the grouping principles can only to a limited degree be brought into mutual agreement; therefore, they cannot become fully effective and must be partially given up when it comes to carrying the subdivision of transportation districts into practice. Instead, a synthesis of principles has to be attempted in order to obtain optimum results in every case.

III. Methods of approach for the practical execution of the grouping into transportation districts.

On the basis of the above preliminary theorems, methods of approach for the regrouping of domestic transportation districts can now be developed. The economic regions are in final analysis decisive for the spatial determination of the transportation districts, but a regional grouping, which is primarily set up for transportation purposes with special consideration for the needs of the individual carriers, has to start with the given media of transportation. Therefore, it is logical to start with the waterways, as the transportation medium which is most strongly tied to lines, and then to expand the thus resulting districts of transportation from lines into areas. Thus not only the transport by the most important waterways will be logically grouped, but also the corresponding overland traffic by rail and road will be clearly represented. In order to consider the special needs of sea transport in the coastal areas, special seaport districts will have to be developed. But since the individual media of transportation are not only subject to laws especially applying to them individually but are complementary to one another and form a higher unit, one will have to apply the

principle that the individual transportation districts should be grouped uniformly for all media of transportation.

According to this methodological approach, the waterways form the framework and serve as an instrument for the further development and the rounding-off of the transportation districts according to the needs of the media of land transport. By this means the special aspects of sea transport, as well as the ones of rail and road freight traffic, receive full emphasis. Furthermore, transportation by all media can be shown as a unit in its functional relationships. Additionally, these methods of approach have the advantage of combining economic and transport-economic aspects in an especially favorable way. Modern, specialized economy was formed out of the parallel development of the national economy and transportation, so that the economic areas can figuratively be considered also as transportation areas and vice versa. This conformity will be existing in the majority, but not in all of the cases. In the event of overlapping, the final rounding-off will have to be done on the basis of economic considerations.

But since, moreover, the grouping into transportation districts has to be accomplished in such a way that the necessary statistical data are also available for political subdivisions, doubled statistics have to be contended with. Transportation districts grouped according to economic and transport-economic considerations have to be subdivided whenever overlapping with administrative boundaries (boundaries of the Laender) occurs. For the compilation of the results of the freight movement statistics according to transportation districts, consideration of the Laender boundaries will not be necessary; but for the Laender-wise compilation of results, transportation districts cut up by Laender boundaries are set up according to the respective Laender in which they fall. Thereby the governments of the Laender are able to discern the transportation interrelationships of transportation districts from one Land to the other.

IV. The effectuation of the grouping into transportation districts.

The system of grouping as outlined in the preceding section served as a guide for the practical execution of the grouping into transportation districts. The following facts of the new transportation districts, effective since 1 Jan 1950, should be stressed:

1. Starting with waterways, as the most tied-down means of transportation, a basic framework for the grouping into transportation districts was created which was closely related to the navigation districts of 1940. This framework then was organically expanded according to the requirements of the rail-bound traffic with corresponding consideration of the needs of the road traffic.

2. The delimitation of transportation districts according to economic and transport-economic viewpoints was carried out uniformly for navigation and land transport. For the purposes of land transport, 10 navigation districts had to be subdivided, and vice-versa, 4 land transportation districts were divided for the purposes of navigation. Provisions were made that the so-formed smaller land transportation and navigation districts could be reassembled into the original larger district (except for a few unimportant cases in which congruity could not be established).

3. For some of the big cities that stand out in the surrounding economic areas as focal points of economy and traffic, special transportation districts were formed.

4. In order to provide for transportation statistics for political subdivisions (Laender), the districts (Kreis) were used in unchanged form whenever possible. This applied especially to districts, the boundaries of which are tangent with a Land boundary. Nevertheless, a few of the districts that tend in economic and transport economic respects toward different economic and transport-economic regions had to be subdivided in conformity with their differentiated tendencies.

By this means the principle of indivisibility of the districts (Kreise) was brought into agreement with the need for an appropriate grouping into transportation districts according to economic viewpoints.

5. The transportation districts were designated differently for land transport and navigation districts: for the land transport districts, the corresponding area had to be designated, while for navigation districts, the route had to be designated according to sections of waterways.

6. The transportation districts were numbered consecutively and uniformly from north to south in close connection with waterway areas. At first, the decimal system of numbering was considered but was later given up for the purely technical reason that it would have led to a higher number of decimals with unfavorable consequences for the coding-and-punching process.

7. The regrouping of transportation districts for the time being has been carried out only for the territory of the Federation because the political situation has made it impossible to carry out a regrouping for all of Germany which would have had a chance of permanency. The numerical sequence of the transportation districts situated in Federal territory reaches up to 66. For German areas lying outside the Federal territory, the following preliminary districts were established:

VB (Transportation District)	98 - West Berlin
VB	99 - East Berlin
VB	100 - Soviet Zone of Occupation
VB	195 - Saarland
VB	198 - German territory under Polish administration
VB	199 - German territory under Soviet administration.

The foreign districts begin with VB No 200. For the land traffic they have been regrouped, while for navigation the subdivision contained in

the Grouping of Transportation Districts of 1940 was carried over in essence for working reasons.

A total of 59 land transportation districts (instead of the former 29), 46 inland navigation districts (formerly 48) and 9 ocean navigation districts (formerly 8) was established for the Federal territory (compare also attached map on the transportation districts). Especially striking is the doubling of the land transportation districts. The reason for that is that the consideration of the aspects of road transportation made an increased subdivision of transportation areas necessary. Comparability in time has been largely preserved so far as navigation districts are concerned, while for land transport districts it can be likewise obtained, with certain exceptions, merely by summarizing several transportation districts.

Whether the solution of the problem is correct in all its parts or whether the transportation districts will have to be revised will become clear only when the results of the freight movement statistics for the year 1950 will be available. In the grouping of transportation districts, especially according to economic viewpoints, the editors had to overcome difficulties because of gaps in the basic materials. Nevertheless, the reorganization of the transportation districts must be considered progress by comparison with the previous state of affairs; but even so, it is only a stepping stone for future development.

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